

April 14, 2020

St. Louis County Department of Public Health COVID-19 Update

Coping with Death

The necessity of social distancing can make meaningful connections with loved ones difficult. This becomes more challenging when grieving a loss during this time of COVID-19.

Due to isolation precautions implemented, family and friends are missing out on the opportunity to say goodbye to their loved one. Quarantine also limits a family's ability to mourn their loss. Some funeral services are being postponed for several months, while other families are forgoing funeral services with plans to hold celebration of life ceremonies in the fall. Faiths have even embraced using technology to have "virtual funerals," which allow family and friends to connect in a time of mourning. The inability to mourn together delays closure and adds to the stress associated with COVID-19.

The mental health of the community continues to be a concern for healthcare professionals in St. Louis. Checking on family members and neighbors can have positive dividends in the mental health of another. Finding ways to connect with others remains a critical component of overall health during this pandemic.

If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed due to the stress of COVID-19 or the death of a loved one, resources are available:

- Missouri Crisis Line: Text "HAND" to 839863
- Disaster Distress Help Line: 1-800-985-5990
- Contact Behavioral Health Response (BHR): 314-469-6644 or <http://bhrstl.org/>
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8225) or www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

The American Psychological Association has provided some additional advice here: <https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/grief-distance>.

Diabetes and COVID-19

Diabetes and other chronic health conditions can be challenging to manage during a public health crisis and these conditions may increase a person's risk of developing serious complications if they contract COVID-19. Here is some advice for those with Diabetes:

- Create an emergency contact list with numbers for friends and family, health care providers, your pharmacy, and your insurance provider. Keep a list of your medications and doses (including vitamins and supplements).
- Have enough, pills, insulin, and testing supplies in case you get sick and can't go to the pharmacy. Include extra batteries for your meter and/or pump.

- Have a supply of glucagon and ketone strips in case of lows and highs.
- Plan ahead so you can make fewer grocery trips or get your groceries delivered. If you are at risk for low blood sugar, keep honey, jam, hard candies, juice, or regular soda on hand to raise your blood sugar level.

Additional resources and sources of information from the American Diabetes Association can be found here: <https://www.diabetes.org/>.

For those struggling with the cost of insulin and diabetes medication, assistance can be found here: <https://insulinhelp.org/>.

Contact Information

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services hotline can be reached at (877)435-8411.

St. Louis County has created a website dedicated to the dissemination of information relating to COVID-19, www.stlcorona.com. Please visit that website or those belonging to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) or the World Health Organization (WHO) for the most current and reputable information.



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